

Students' Perceptions on the Role of Google Translate in Learning English

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Abstract

This research aims to determine the perceptions of electronics engineering students regarding the role of Google Translate in learning English. The method used in this research is a qualitative method using a questionnaire instrument to obtain student perceptions. The research results show that 64.7% of students use Google Translate quite often, 76.5% said Google Translate helps them in learning English. However, 82.4% said they had quite difficulty understanding the results from Google Translate. However, Google Translate role in increasing understanding of new vocabulary is quite helpful because 72.2% said it was quite helpful. However, around 39.9% said Google Translate could negatively influence grammar learning. So, it can be concluded that Google Translate has a role in learning English, but it is necessary to analyze the results of Google Translate because it still has several weaknesses, especially in grammar.

Keywords: *Perception, Google Translate, English.*

Introduction

The use of technology in learning has increased significantly. This is because of the many conveniences offered by technology. English learning is also supported by applications, both through the web and mobile-based applications. The English learning application that is often used is Google Translate.

Google translate is an application that has a role in learning English. However, its role as a learning medium still needs to be known for its benefits for the development of language competence for users, especially in learning English for foreign speakers. However, on the other hand, Google Translate provides influence and convenience in translating languages to the target language. So that the number of enthusiasts is quite large. Selfiana (2012:1) explains that Google Translate in translating one to paragraph will provide fairly accurate results although there are still some that need to be fixed because this is the target language, the language structure is different from the original language so that Google Translate is only a pra-translate that still needs to be fixed.

So that the factors of language development towards the use of Google Translate still need to be studied to determine the role of Google in foreign language learning. Every student certainly has a perception about the usefulness of Google Translate depending on the use and needs of each student. Moreover, Google Translate has features ranging from translating text, images and even translating voice through the

recording feature provided by Google. From this, it also provides convenience for its users when compared to using a printed dictionary or in book form. However, Faqih (2022:96) users must understand the structure of the target language and the original language translated using Google Translate.

Tongpoon-Patanasorn (2020) uses Google Translate in language translation still has a moderate level and does not have academic language requirements because this has found problems such as capital letters, punctuation and fragmentation. In addition, the research results from Baharuddin (2021:822) show that in the translation learning process, students' ability to edit Google Translate results into good results using translation rules is still below standard. This is because some students still seem passive and hesitant in applying the translation theory that they have understood.

Google Translate can provide positive and negative impacts in learning English. Fitriani (2021:169) negative impacts such as saving time, can enrich new vocabulary, can help check grammar and can know the composition of the language well. While the negative impact makes lazy to review other references and reduces motivation to write. So from this it is necessary to know that every student in learning English using Google Translate needs to ask about the role of this tool in improving English language skills.

In 2020, Google Translate provides 109 languages at various levels. On the Google Translate translation engine, users can not only translate words but also sentences and even text with a limit of 3900 characters. This online translation engine can also translate various forms of text and media, especially written words, images, bilingual conversations, text in other applications, and documents or pages. Another innovation presented by Google in its online translation service is the Neural Machine Translation mode or abbreviated (NMT), which is a translation technology based on artificial intelligence to present more accurate, easy to understand, and natural translation results. This NMT technology is already available for translation features from Indonesian to English, or vice versa. This Neural Machine Translation mode allows users to translate word by word or even sentence by sentence. Using Google Translate, users can directly type the word or sentence they want to translate or can also use the camera feature to translate words or sentences or even text to make it easier for users without having to type it first.

This study aims to determine the role of Google Translate in learning English so that it can be known and respond to the use of this application as a support and media in learning English for Engineering students as foreign language speakers.

Method

The method used in this study to examine students' perceptions of the role of Google Translate in learning English is a qualitative method. Researchers try to explore what the research subjects think about the use of Google Translate with this approach, it is hoped that the use of Google Translate in the Electronic Engineering Study Program of the Politeknik Dewantara can be described carefully and in depth.

This study took data from students using an instrument, namely a questionnaire. Referring to the guidelines that have been prepared to determine students' perceptions of the use of Google Translate in learning English. The sample selection technique in this study used total sampling. Where the research subjects were semester 1 students of Electronic Engineering at the Dewantara Polytechnic in the 2024/2025 academic year.

Results

This section explains students' perceptions of the role of Google Translate in learning English. Some of the roles of Google Translate that are obtained in learning English such as the frequency of students using Google Translate, difficulty understanding the results of Google Translate, the role of Google Translate in learning new vocabulary in English, the role of Google Translate in improving speaking skills, the role of Google Translate in improving knowledge in understanding English grammar and students' dependence on using Google Translate compared to independent learning.

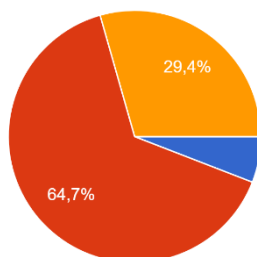


Diagram 1. Frequency of use of Google Translate in learning English

In the questionnaire, students were given a statement about how often they use Google Translate in learning English. Around 64.7% of students chose to use Google Translate quite often. While 29.4% of students chose sometimes, and 5.9% chose rarely. After conducting an interview approach, students who chose rarely turned out to use other applications to learn English. And the majority of students chose to use Google Translate because the use of Google Translate can help easily and cheaply. After conducting an interview approach, students who chose rarely turned out to use other applications to learn English. And the majority of students chose to use Google Translate because the use of Google Translate can help easily and cheaply.

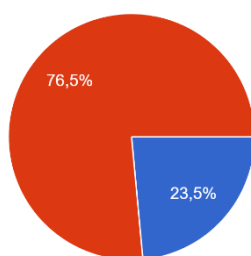


Diagram 2. Google translate helps improve English learning comprehension

In addition to the frequency of use of Google Translate, a statement was also given whether Google Translate helps in improving understanding of English. Of the five answer options given, only two options were chosen by students, namely very helpful and quite helpful. Around 76.5% of the total respondents chose quite helpful and 23.5% of students chose very helpful. And no students chose This can be seen in the diagram below. After seeing this diagram, it can be concluded that most students use Google Translate in line with the statements given by students to choose in what cases to use Google Translate in learning English. 82.4% said when translating words or sentences. 52.9% said to understand texts in English and 23.5% said to improve English vocabulary. This we can conclude that Google Translate is indeed more towards

translating from the original language to the target language. In line with the initial purpose of Google Translate as a translation tool.

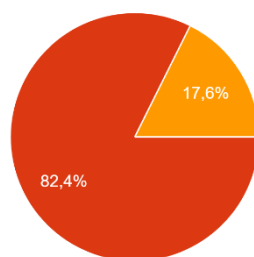


Diagram 3. Do you find it difficult to understand the results of Google Translate

Then the next statement gives the results of how difficult it is for students to understand the results of Google Translate. There are 82.4% who say it is quite difficult to understand the translation from Google Translate, both from the target language and from the translation results from their language. And 17.6% say they have no difficulty in understanding the results of Google Translate. Although Google Translate makes it easy to do translations, the results of Google Translate still need to be analyzed and understood. The translation results from Google Translate are still in the form of pre-translations that need to be analyzed for the meaning of the original language when transferred to the target language. The grammar of the target language from Google Translate needs to be re-analyzed to see the accuracy of the use of language that is in accordance with the rules of the language itself. So an error analysis of the translation results from Google Translate is needed.

To see the student response regarding the role of Google Translate in helping students understand new vocabulary, it can be seen that 72.2% of students chose quite helpful, 22.2% of students chose very helpful and 5.6% chose not very helpful.

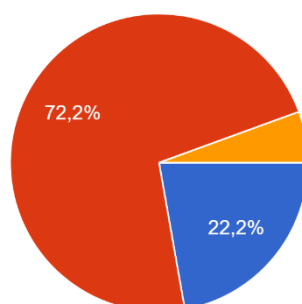


Diagram 4. Google Translate helps in understanding new English vocabulary

It turns out that these results show a significant influence on the understanding of new English vocabulary in using Google Translate as a tool in learning English for Electronic Engineering students. This is also seen in the questionnaire given regarding the influence of Google Translate in improving student speaking.

This is different from the role of Google Translate in learning grammar. Respondents said that Google Translate breaks down the need to learn grammar. The diagram shows that around 44% feel it does not affect, but 38.9% say it reduces the need to learn grammar and 16.7% say it does not reduce it at all. This can be seen in the following diagram.

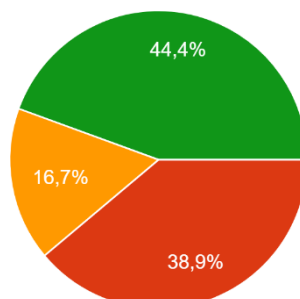


Diagram 5. Google Translate reduces the need to learn grammar

It can be seen that some respondents said that it was quite easy to analyze in learning grammar and some said that it did not reduce understanding in learning grammar when using Google Translate.

This is different from the statement whether Google Translate makes users more dependent on this tool than learning independently.

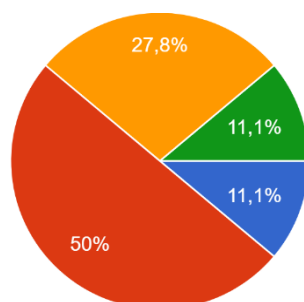


Diagram 6. Google Translate makes users more dependent than learning independently

From the diagram above, it can be seen that 50% of respondents said they were quite dependent on Google Translate in learning English, 11.1% said they were very dependent, 27.8% did not depend and 11.1% said they did not depend at all.

Discussion

Google Translate is a translation tool with several features that can help translate words, sentences and paragraphs through voice recordings and speakers to hear the sound of typing on the word Google Translate. The study showed several roles of Google Translate in learning English by Electronic Engineering students. Some results that require further discussion where students show almost all students use Google Translate as a medium to help learn English. Alam (2020:162) the use of Google Translate can be one solution for academics to understand the text as a whole so that it can be a solution in understanding foreign language texts or literature in foreign languages.

In addition, Google Translate is also a translation tool so that Google Translate can also increase knowledge of new English vocabulary. So in its use it is necessary to understand what will be translated so that it can improve understanding of new vocabulary or terms from the target language to the original language. However, the obstacles faced can reduce the accuracy of the grammar which is the result of the Google Translate translation because this is still pre-translation. Novianty (2024:58) explains that Google Translate shows more grammatical errors,

especially in syntax, while DeepL has more cultural errors, especially related to terminology. This is in line with the data found in this study where in addition to Google Translate users, dependence on this tool also reduces the need to learn grammar.

Many users of Google Translate immediately believe in the results without rechecking or even just copying and pasting. The use of Google Translate can be used in the learning process, but it is necessary to be aware that the results of Google Translate still need to be analyzed for the perfection of understanding that will be received by language learners. So, it requires further study to perfect the results of Google Translate, such as understanding grammar in the language, sometimes errors are still found which are the results of Google Translate.

Conclusion

Based on the study above, it can be concluded that Google Translate has a contribution to foreign language learners, especially English. Because of the dependency and convenience offered by Google Translate in language translation, it cannot be denied when compared to using a dictionary in book form. However, in its role as a medium in improving language competence, it still needs to be upgraded so that it does not find misunderstanding for beginner foreign language learners and requires methods and approaches in its use.

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